



Canva Basics & Printing Considerations

Canva is an easy-to-use design platform that allows you to create professional-looking marketing materials using templates provided by the NNU Marketing Team. These templates ensure brand consistency, proper formatting, and high-quality designs that align with the university's visual identity.

Basic Canva Tips:

- Use **only the templates provided** to maintain brand consistency. (If you do not see what you need reach out to marketing so we can provide a solution or new template.)
- Stick to **NNU brand colors, fonts, and logos**
- Keep text **clear and readable** (avoid excessive decorative fonts or small sizes).
- Use **high-quality images**—avoid pixelated or low-resolution photos. (Marketing is available to provide the photos you would need, please request through marketing@nnu.edu)
- Maintain proper **margins and spacing** to prevent overcrowding.

Printing Considerations:

Design choices directly impact print quality. Following these guidelines will help ensure your materials look professional when printed:

- **Color Mode Matters** – Canva defaults to RGB (for screens), but printers use CMYK. Avoid overly bright colors that may not print accurately.
- **Resolution & Size** – Use **high-resolution images (300 DPI or higher)** for printed materials to avoid blurriness.
- **Bleed & Safe Zones** – Ensure important text and images are not too close to the edges. Some designs may require a bleed (extra margin for trimming).
- **File Format for Printing** – If sending to print, **download as a PDF (Print)** for the best results. Marketing is happy to send to print on your behalf to provide the printer with size and crop marks.

Here are some common font and text layout issues to avoid in Canva designs, along with best practices to keep NNU's materials professional and readable.

Common Font & Text Layout Issues in Canva

1. Using Too Many Fonts

- **Issue:** Mixing too many fonts creates a cluttered, unprofessional look.
- **Fix:** Stick to **NNU's approved fonts** and limit designs to **two complementary fonts**—one for headings and one for body text.

2. Small or Thin Fonts That Are Hard to Read

- **Issue:** Thin, light, or small fonts may look good on screen but become unreadable in print.
- **Fix:** Use at least **12pt for body text** and **24pt+ for headings** in print. Bold or medium-weight fonts are best for visibility.

3. Poor Contrast Between Text and Background

- **Issue:** Light text on a light background or dark text on a dark background reduces readability.
- **Fix:** Ensure **high contrast** (e.g., dark text on a light background) and avoid using colors that are too similar.

4. Text Too Close to the Edges

- **Issue:** Important text may get cut off during printing.
- **Fix:** Keep text **at least 0.25 inches** from the edge of the design. If printing with a bleed, maintain a **safe margin** to prevent cropping issues.

5. Overcrowded or Unbalanced Text Layout

- **Issue:** Too much text in one area can make the design feel cramped and hard to read.
- **Fix:** Use **white space** effectively to create balance. Keep paragraphs short and break up large text blocks.

6. Centering Everything by Default

- **Issue:** Centering all text can make it look generic and harder to read.
- **Fix:** Use **left alignment** for body text (easier to read) and center alignment **only for short headings or quotes**.

Final Check Before Printing:

- ✔ Review text for typos and alignment.
- ✔ Ensure images and graphics are high resolution.
- ✔ Use brand colors and fonts.
- ✔ Export as **PDF (Print)**

By following these best practices, we can ensure that our printed materials look professional and align with NNU's brand standards. If you have any questions or need adjustments, please reach out to the Marketing Team at marketing@nnu.edu. Ensuring quality designs from the start saves time, reduces printing costs, and keeps NNU's brand looking its best.